

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-15 USIA-06 IO-13 EA-07 AID-05 EB-07 AGRE-00

TRSE-00 OES-07 COME-00 OMB-01 DHA-02 /110 W

-----024730 012013Z /61

R 011107Z JUL 77

FM AMEMBASSY VICTORIA

TO SECSTATE WASH DC 443

INFO AMEMBASSY ANTANANARIVO

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY PORT LOUIS

STATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L VICTORIA 381

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PINS, SE

SUBJECT: FIRST ANNIVERSARY OF SEYCHELLES INDEPENDENCE

SUMMARY: HIGHLIGHT OF FIRST ANNIVERSARY OF SEYCHELLES INDEPENDENCE WAS HOUR-LONG STADIUM CEREMONY ATTENDED BY CAPACITY CROWD OF ENTHUSIASTIC SUPPORTERS OF PRESIDENT RENE. CEREMONY INCLUDED UNFURLING OF NEW NATIONAL FLAG AND POLICY ADDRESS BY RENE WHICH FOCUSED ON DOMESTIC ISSUES. TIGHT SECURITY WAS IN EFFECT AT STADIUM AND WE HAVE RECEIVED RELIABLE REPORTS THAT NUMBER OF SUPPORTERS OF DEPOSED PRESIDENT MANCHAM WERE DETAINED DURING NIGHT PRECEEDING CEREMONY.

1. FIRST ANNIVERSARY OF SEYCHELLES JUNE 29 INDEPENDENCE PASSED UNEVENTFULLY WITH STADIUM CEREMONY, PRESIDENTIAL RECEPTION AND ATHLETIC AND SOCIAL EVENTS. HIGHLIGHT OF CELEBRATIONS WAS HOUR-LONG STADIUM CEREMONY ATTENDED BY ESTIMATED 10-12,000 ENTHUSIASTIC
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RENE SUPPORTERS. IN ADDITION TO HEADS OF FIVE RESIDENT DIPLO-MATIC MISSIONS, SEVERAL NON-RESIDENT AMBASSADORS ACCREDITED TO SEYCHELLES AND SPECIAL DELEGATION FROM GABON WERE IN ATTENDANCE. HONOR GUARDS WERE PROVIDED BY VISITING U.S. AND FRENCH WARSHIPS AND AUSTRALIAN P-3 AIRCRAFT MADE FLY-BY.

2. PRESIDENT RENE IN 20 MINUTE STADIUM ADDRESS IN CREOLE BRIEFLY

REITERATED REASONS BEHIND JUNE 5 COUP AND PROCLAIMED "NEW ORDER" IN SEYCHELLES SOCIETY. IN SPEECH PRIMARILY GEARED FOR DOMESTIC CONSUMPTION, HE SAID YEAR OF COALITION GOVERNMENT WAS "ARTIFICIAL" ON BOTH SIDES AND THAT REAL UNITY OF PURPOSE WAS TOTALLY ABSENT. SINCE PREVIOUS NATIONAL FLAG INCORPORATING COLORS OF TWO POLITICAL PARTIES HAD SYMBOLIZED THIS ARTIFICIAL UNITY, NEW FLAG WAS NECESSARY. (NEW SEYCHELLES FLAG COMPOSED OF RED/WHITE/GREEN WAVY HORIZONTAL BARS, UPPER RED PORTION COVERS HALF OF FLAG AREA AND IS SEPARATED FROM LOWER GREEN PORTION BY A THIN WHITE BAR). RENE SAID NEW FLAG AND STILL TO BE WRITTEN NEW NATIONAL ANTHEM SYMBOLIZE 13 YEARS OF STRUGGLE FOR "LIBERATION" BY RENE'S SEYCHELLES PEOPLE'S UNITED PARTY (SPUP).

3. ON DOMESTIC FRONT, RENE CALLED FOR A NEW SENSE OF NATIONAL DISCIPLINE, HARD WORK AND UNITY. HE SAID GOVERNMENT WOULD GIVE PRIORITY ATTENTION TO DEVELOPMENT OF AGRICULTURE (SELF-SUFFICIENCY IN FOOD WAS STATED GOAL), CREATION OF FISHING INDUSTRY AND DIVERSIFICATION OF ECONOMY THROUGH GRADUAL ESTABLISHMENT OF LIGHT INDUSTRY. HE SAID FOREIGN INVESTORS WOULD CONTINUE TO RECEIVE WARM WELCOME AND THAT DEVELOPMENT BANK WOULD BE ESTABLISHED IN NEAR FUTURE. RENE ALSO PROMISED EQUAL EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL.

4. IN TOUGH REMARKS DIRECTED AT LOCAL DISSIDENTS, RENE SHARPLY ATTACKED THOSE WHO "CREAT DIVISION AND DISCRIMINATION" AND ATTEMPT TO RESURRECT "OLD LIES AND PROPAGANDA" ABOUT LEADERS OF NEW GOVERNMENT. HE CALLED SEYCHELLOIS "A REVOLUTIONARY CONFIDENTIAL

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PEOPLE" AND SAID THIS WAS "NOT A GOVERNMENT TO BE PLAYED GAMES WITH." WHILE IT DID NOT SEEK VENGEANCE, IT "WOULD REACT WITHOUT PITY" AGAINST "MALICIOUS LIARS" AND THOSE WHO SPREAD "FALSE AND MISLEADING PROPAGANDA." FINALLY, RENE DEFENDED THE CREATION OF AN ARMY TO "PROTECT PEOPLE'S ACHIEVEMENTS." ADDRESS WAS FREQUENTLY INTERRUPTED BY LOUD APPLAUSE.

5. ALTHOUGH THERE WERE NO DISTURBANCES OR INCIDENTS (AS HAD BEEN RUMORED EARLY IN WEEK), EMBASSY HAS LEARNED THAT A NUMBER OF FOLLOWERS OF DEPOSED PRESIDENT MANCHAM WERE PICKED UP BY RENE'S IRREGULARS DURING NIGHT OF JUNE 28-29. WHILE ACCOUNTS DIFFER, IT APPEARS THAT TOTAL WAS BETWEEN 20-40 AND INCLUDED FOUR FORMER BACKBENCH MP'S FROM MANCHAM'S SDP PARTY. MOST WERE SEIZED AT HOME AFTER MIDNIGHT. ALL WERE INTERROGATED AND SOME RELEASED AFTER QUESTIONING. LAST WERE FREED AT ABOUT 0900 JUNE 29. WE ASSUME DETENTIONS WERE CARRIED OUT IN ACCORDANCE WITH NEW EMERGENCY PROVISIONS OF STATE SECURITY ACT (VICTORIA 350).

6. COMMENT: GOVERNMENT APPEARS CLEARLY RELIEVED TO HAVE WEATHERED INDEPENDENCE ANNIVERSARY PERIOD WITHOUT INCIDENT. HOWEVER, TONE OF STERN WARNINGS CONTAINED IN STADIUM SPEECH AND DETENTION OF MANCHAM SUPPORTERS HAVE HAD UNSETTLING EFFECT ON

THE LARGE NUMBER OF SEYCHELLOIS WHO REGARD RENE AS ONLY
SIGNIFICANT FORCE FOR MODERATION IN NEW GOVERNMENT.
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